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SUBJECT: KENYA DROUGHT UPDATE - 2006/7 SHORT RAINS
ASSESSMENT AND WAY FORWARD

REF: A. NAIROBI 738 B. 05 NAIROBI 7345 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY

¶1. Kenya's interagency food security assessment for the 2006/7 short-rains (October- December) has been completed. The overall assessment process and methodology was coordinated and backstopped by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) comprising representatives of line ministries within the GOK, NGO and UN agencies.

¶2. The assessment revealed significant improvement in food security in most parts of the country including the pastoral areas. However, an upsurge in diseases, most notably the Rift Valley Fever (RVF), Lumpy Skin Disease and the contagious bovine pleuro pneumonia, reversed anticipated gains from favorable short rains, and the impacts of these diseases are being felt in some pastoralist districts. Additionally, the cumulative impact of several previous years of drought on livelihoods should not be underemphasized. While emergency relief food helped to save lives and to prevent further deterioration of the asset base, the underlying causes of food insecurity continue to haunt hundreds of thousands of Kenyans.

3.3. .The Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) has recommended that 919,843 persons, situated predominantly in the pastoral areas, continue to be targeted under general feeding and cash/food for asset programs through September 2007. In addition, KFSSG recommends that 391,772 children continue to participate in school feeding programs. In total, just over 1.3 million persons will be targeted under various programs that are aimed at meeting immediate needs while enhancing recovery. This number represents a significant drawdown from the initial caseloads of 3.1 million targeted beneficiaries at the height of the 2006 drought, subsequently reduced to 2.4 million. Gross food requirements for the next six months (April-September)

are estimated at 84,723 MT, valued at approximately US\$48 million. Of this, 60,000 MT is already resourced either in country or in the pipeline, leaving a net requirement of approximately 25,000 MT valued at US\$14 million. A specific request for emergency food aid will be forthcoming pending further discussions with the GOK, WFP and other donors.

¶4. The KFSSG has also emphasized that urgent mitigation and recovery programs are central to sustaining the recovery process, noting that the absence of such programs has often led to the use of relief assistance as a stop-gap measure even as chronic food insecurity becomes entrenched. End summary.

THE FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK AND KEY FINDINGS

¶5. An interagency and multi-sectoral food security assessment organized by the Kenya Food Security Group (KFSSG) completed the fieldwork and data analysis and issued its final report on April 12, 2007.

¶6. This is the first assessment that has used the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification System (IPC) as the analytical framework for situation and response analysis. The IPC is developed by the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and is designed to add rigor to food security analysis and be transparent and evidence-based. Because it employs a uniform set of indicators, and internationally recognized thresholds for many of them, the IPC provides a common currency for food security and humanitarian analysis that allows direct comparisons within and between countries. The IPC has four components. The first component is Phase Classification, which is a scale running from Generally Food Secure and Chronically Food Insecure, through Acute Livelihoods Crisis, to Humanitarian Emergency and finally Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe. Each phase is assigned based on a convergence of evidence that is framed by the second component - the Key Reference Outcomes - together with other indirect evidence that is available. The Strategic Framework (third component) allows analysis to recommend the broad types of response that would meet immediate and underlying needs of people in the different phases. Finally, the Early Warning component provides information on the direction of change and relative risk.

¶7. Based on this analytical framework, the assessment revealed the following key findings:

¶8. I) Of the thirty-two vulnerable districts assessed (some under the current EMOP) that fall within the marginal mixed farming livelihoods zone and pockets in the agro-pastoral zone, six in the eastern, four in the coastal belt, and five mixed-farming areas are considered Generally Food Secure. These districts received good levels of rainfall and an above average harvest, resulting in increased food availability at household level, food diversity on the market, and low and stable cereal prices. Hence, no food interventions are recommended in view of these food security improvements.

¶9. II) Eight districts (some districts partially) within the pastoral livelihoods and marginal mixed farming livelihoods zone, are classified under the Chronically Food Insecure Phase ? Alert Level. This classification is based on the fact that the main food security indicators, including food consumption and food diversity, are chronically at the minimum threshold levels. However, as market food availability and access conditions have improved, general food distributions and

selective feeding are not considered viable or necessary options. Expanded school feeding and cash interventions are recommended due to food availability in the market. Food for assets will be considered in the absence of readily available cash intervention programs in the pastoral areas.

¶10. III) Three districts in the pastoral livelihood zone (Marsabit, Samburu and Kwale hinterland) that have received favorable rainfall, and were mostly spared from the RVF outbreak, are classified under the Chronically Food Insecure Phase ? Moderate Risk. Significant household food deficits still exist in certain geographic areas under this phase classification as the recovery process has not yet been full completed. Food for assets is recommended due to food access and availability constraints. General Food Distribution is recommended for the interim until appropriate programs are established. Selective feeding is recommended in areas of high malnutrition.

¶11. IV) Four pastoral districts (Mandera, Turkana, Wajir and parts of Isiolo) characterized by widespread long-term unsustainable use of natural resources (land and water), persistent and cyclical recurrence of production shortfalls, health epidemics, and chronic malnutrition are classified under Chronically Food Insecure Phase ? High Risk. Although these areas were not affected directly by the RVF -- and hence no livestock death was reported or human lives lost --

markets were disrupted, which affected incomes of local households. General Food Distribution is recommended until food availability and access constraints are mitigated and Cash Interventions and/or Food for Assets Interventions are operational. Selective feeding is recommended in view of high malnutrition.

¶12. V) Five districts comprising most of the eastern pastoral livelihoods zone (Garissa, Ijara, Isiolo, Tana River and Wajir) are classified under Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis Phase. This cluster represents chronically food insecure areas affected by multiple shocks that have pushed the food security line below the minimum acceptable for the livelihood zone. The drought and floods, followed by RVF, have resulted in infrastructure damage, massive livestock death, market disruption and loss of income for pastoralists. General Food Distribution is recommended while supporting and phasing in Cash for Work and Food for Assets interventions. Recommended also is Expanded and Strengthened Selective Feeding in combination with other interventions in view of high malnutrition rates.

SHORT-TERM, RECOVERY AND LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS CRITICAL FOR SUSTAINED LIVELIHOODS

¶13. Based on the above findings derived from the IPC analytical framework, the KFSSG has recommended that just over 1.3 million persons continue to receive relief assistance. Of these, 919,843 are targeted for general distribution and cash/food for asset programs, 120,000 under the selective feeding program, and 271,772 children under the expanded school feeding program. In spite of this caseload and continued need for emergency assistance, KFSSG argues that the observed widespread improvement in food security should provide the best opportunity for systematically addressing the underlying causes of food insecurity that invariably amplify the impacts of any one poor season.

¶14. In view of this, the KFSSG has proposed several types of interventions that could take advantage of current favorable food security conditions and build the resilience of pastoral livelihoods. These interventions

include: piloting cash-based transfers in selected districts; establishing a certification system for the Rift Valley Fever and other diseases requiring quarantines; rehabilitating infrastructure in the market-dependent pastoral livelihood zones; addressing chronically high malnutrition and poor access to health services; assisting destitute pastoralists; improving land, water and crop management; strengthening national drought management capacity and enhancing emergency preparedness; and enacting the national policy for sustainable development of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya. According to the assessment report, in order to carry out specific activities under each area of intervention in the next six months, the agriculture sector needs US\$8.3 million; livestock sector US\$28.6 million; water and sanitation US\$10 million, and health and nutrition US\$3.4 million.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

¶15. Emergency relief assistance in Kenya has been instrumental in saving lives and averting major humanitarian crises. The USG alone provided over US\$140 million emergency assistance over the last year and a half through various programs, including food aid and non-food relief assistance to drought-affected and other

vulnerable populations -- including refugees who fled from neighboring countries due to protracted war and insecurity. The USG also responded to the recent Rift Valley Fever outbreak in Kenya by donating 800,000 critically needed doses of live-attenuated vaccines valued at \$471,000. Emergency assistance is critical in saving lives and addressing short-term food security concerns, and the USG should continue to extend such assistance. However, unless such emergency assistance is complemented by urgently needed mitigation and recovery programs, short-term emergency assistance alone will not have the optimal impact. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that in spite of large food disbursements, food insecurity has risen precariously (particularly in the pastoral areas) in Kenya since ¶2003.

¶16. Key underlying causes of food insecurity in pastoral areas need to be addressed comprehensively through coordinated mitigation, recovery and long-term development programs. In the absence of those programs, households are unable to recover completely when conditions do improve, due to the cumulative impact of droughts and other natural disasters. Other key issues that need to be addressed in a sustained manner include: a poorly functioning infrastructure for a livelihood (livestock production) that is heavily market-dependent as well as for overall economic integration and growth; sustained debilitating conflict and extensive land degradation due to over-use of scarce resources; a rise in destitution and dependency on external assistance; and a lack of complementary and/or alternative economic opportunities.

¶17. However, there appears to be an increasing recognition among the donor community, UN Agencies and the GoK that comprehensive recovery and longer-term development programs are critical to preventing cyclical vulnerability and to sustaining food security. In this connection, various formal and informal discussions have been held among donor groups to map out best strategies on how to move this agenda forward with tangible political and resource commitment from the GoK. USAID/Kenya, as the largest food aid donor (at times next to the GoK) in the country, is taking a lead role in this discussion, along with DFID, UN agencies, the EU, World Bank and other interested donor representatives.

¶18. Recognizing the need for supplementary assistance to finance initiatives which create conditions and opportunities for the chronically food insecure, USAID/East Africa requested and programmed \$19.8 million from the International Disaster and Famine Assistance ("famine Fund") for the Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Program (RELPA). RELPA comprises several interrelated components aimed at addressing chronic failure of the pastoralist livelihood system in the Mandera Triangle - a large, arid region encompassing parts of Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, which was the epicenter of 2006 hunger crisis in the Horn. The program incorporates a \$10 million program (Enhanced Livelihoods in the Mandera Triangle) to implement activities that are expected to increase the self-reliance of the populations in pastoral areas. RELPA also seeks to increase the level of engagement of the governments in the target area to focus on longer-term development needs of their ASAL populations, under the overarching coordination of COMESA.

¶19. The underlying causes of the prolonged food crisis in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid pastoral and marginal agricultural areas clearly go much deeper than emergency assistance programs alone can address. The problem is fundamentally one of chronic poverty, necessitating

strategies to address the root causes of food insecurity on a sustained basis. This calls for more dialogue with and policy actions by the GOK that promote targeted and sustained investments in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas in order to reduce levels of poverty and extreme vulnerability. Notwithstanding the climate variations and the ensuing unreliability of rains, the areas are endowed with diverse resources that, if managed creatively, could significantly improve the livelihoods of the communities at risk.

¶20. USAID/Kenya will continue to play an active role in the dialogue around understanding the factors underlying repeated food crises in various parts of the country and in finding new approaches to protect poor people from short-term shocks and reduce their food insecurity in the medium term. This discussion will contribute to joint GOK-donor commitment to tackling chronic food insecurity in a more effective manner.

¶21. In the meantime, given the existing emergency food pipeline gap, the USG should sustain its relief assistance to meet the urgent food and non-food needs of 1.3 million persons expected to suffer from the protracted drought over the coming six months. A specific request for emergency food aid will be forthcoming pending further discussions with the GOK, WFP and other donors.

RANNEBERGER